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DAVIDSON

Lincoln





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Book D 25





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THE LESSONS OF THE HOUR.

A DISCOURSE

UPON

THE DEATH

OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN,

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DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

HUNTINGTON, LONG ISLAND,

April 19th, 1865,

BY REV. ROBERT DAVIDSON, D. D.

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HUNTINGTON, April 19, 1865

DR. DAVIDSON—REV. AND DEAR SIR:—We, the undersigned, thinking that the excellent discourse delivered by you this day to “the great congregation,” on the death of our lamented Chief Magistrate, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, should have a still more extended influence, do respectfully ask it of you for publication.

GEO. H. SHEPARD,  
JOHN J. WELLS,  
ROBT. ROGERS,  
Z. KETCHAM,  
GEO. A. SCUDDER,  
JOHN HOPPER,  
C. W. ELDRIDGE.

S. C. HAYFORD,  
ISAAC ROGERS,  
WM. J. WOOD,  
GEO. W. SMITH,  
S. WOODHULL,  
J. R. ROLPH,

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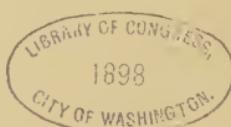
HUNTINGTON, April 20, 1865.

GENTLEMEN:—The discourse of which you ask the publication, is placed at your disposal. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the haste and pressure under which it was unavoidably prepared, should exempt it from that severe criticism to which elaborate and finished compositions are supposed to be liable. If the publication may subserve any useful purpose, I shall be satisfied.

Yours Respectfully,

R. DAVIDSON.

Messrs. SHEPARD, SCUDDER, SMITH, and others.



## THE LESSONS OF THE HOUR.

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"And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people."—2 Sam. xix. 2.

It would be superfluous to attempt, on the present occasion, to bespeak your attention, to disarm your prejudices, or to enlist your sympathy. All that is already done. You have no prejudices to be disarmed, your sympathies are engaged, your attention is awakened. A more powerful speaker, a more convincing orator, has spoken, and at this moment speaks, with more than human eloquence, at once to your hearts, and to the hearts of thirty millions of people. Carried on the lightning's wing, the mournful intelligence has spread from one end of the continent to the other, and there is but one sentiment every where. At this hour, when the sad obsequies are being conducted in the Federal City, simultaneously, in thirty thousand churches, thirty thousand pulpits are attempting to interpret the voice of Providence, and to direct into a pious channel the tears of a mourning nation.

Party clamor is for the time hushed. Party names are not, and ought not, to be mentioned. To day there is but one party in the land, that is, the party of *patriotism*. No one thinks, no one speaks, of any thing else than the calamity which has befallen us. All seem overwhelmed by the greatness of a sorrow for which words are inadequate. All are prompt to offer their tribute of praise to our late lamented and beloved President; and none more so than his former political opponents. They who lent no aid to his first elevation to office, have been satisfied, by a severe trial, of his honesty of purpose, his conscientiousness, his integrity, his pure patriotism, his sagacity, his breadth of statesmanship, his candid appreciation of the drift of events, his equilibrium between the extremes of conservatism and progress, his firm grappling with the root, the tap-root, of the national troubles, his freedom from vindictiveness, his humane and conciliatory spirit, his pacific plans, just about to flower into development. They have seen all this, and have watched his impartial hand adjusting the balances for the last four years, impressing his own views on the policy of the country, and finally conducting us out of unprecedented difficulties and perils; and they have candidly acknowledged (I quote their very language,) that "there is no man who can occupy his place, so strong in the confidence

of the people, so earnest to do right, and so anxious to do justice to all."\* And here is a similar attestation emanating by authority from the highest source: "Believing ABRAHAM LINCOLN, as a ruler, to have been governed by patriotic motives, honesty of purpose, and an elevated appreciation of the grave and responsible duties imposed upon him in the greatest crisis of our country's history—commanding in so great a degree the confidence of the loyal people of the nation—and exhibiting in the recent events which had culminated in the downfall of the rebellion, a wise, forbearing and magnanimous statesmanship, the exercise of which gave such hopeful promise of a speedy and perfect restoration of the national Union in the spirit and principles upon which it was founded; we regard his sad end and untimely decease as a great misfortune to the whole country."†

I prefer to repeat commendations from such disinterested sources rather than offer any of my own.

### What are the Lessons of the Hour?

How hath God multiplied his mementoes, and given us line upon line! How many have we seen, the favorites of fortune, admired and envied by the crowd, in the very spring tide of their greatness, culminating to the meridian of their glory, "haste to their setting, like an exhalation of the evening," quenched in portentous night! There was Herod, smitten with a loathsome disease in the very height of popular applause. There was Fiesco, flushed with the success of his ambitious plans, stepping off a plank and dragged down by the weight of his armor into the dock, to rise no more. There was the Princess Charlotte, the youthful wife of Leopold, the probable queen of Great Britain, suddenly carried to the grave amid the sincere grief of the whole people; "who appeared," in Robert Hall's eloquent language, "to have been placed on the pinnacle of society for the express purpose of rendering her fall the more conspicuous. The Deity himself adorned the victim with his own hands. He permitted her to touch whatever this sublunary scene presents that is most attractive and alluring, but to grasp nothing; and after conducting her to an eminence whence she could survey all the glories of empire as her destined possession, closed her eyes in death."‡ There was Huskisson, elated by the restored smiles of princely favor, crushed and mangled beneath an advancing train. There was the accomplished Legare, hurried out of life by a rapid malady soon after taking the seals of office. There was Gilmer snatched from the council board within a brief week from his elevation, by the explosion of the great cannon on the *Princeton*. And time would fail me to enumerate, only by name, the brave men who have fallen in their country's cause, since the commencement of this war, beginning with Col. Ellsworth, the first martyr, down to Col. Hugh Janeway, buried last week.

"The paths of Glory lead but to the grave."

Three times has the Capitol of this nation been draped in mourning

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\* Purdy.      † Tammany Hall.      ‡ Hall's Works, ii. p. 154.

For the sudden and unexpected demise of the Chief Magistrate.

"In자iate A'cher! could not once suffice?  
Thrice flew thy shaft, and thrice our peace was slain."

In 1841 General Harrison was carried into the Presidential Chair on the tumultuous tide of popular applause. No voice was heard but that of mutual congratulation. It was confidently expected that a new order of things was now to be witnessed; that the dangers and difficulties and embarrassments of the country were happily surmounted; that the political sea was calmed, and all would go on prosperously and smoothly. In a few brief weeks all was alarm and agitation. The Chair was empty; how it was refilled history will say. A new policy was introduced; every thing was once more thrown into confusion; wars and rumors of wars came thick upon the breeze; then was paved the way for the very troubles which continued for years to fill us with dismay. Was it that we had counted too much on "Man whose breath is in his nostrils," and had forgotten One above who should have been consulted? Did we think that we had now our favorite safely in office, and we might defy chance and change? How easy was it for the Almighty to blow upon our work, and to "hiss for the fly" from the uttermost part of the land! In a moment the counsels of the wise were turned into foolishness, and the heart of the people was taken away.

Not greatly dissimilar was the position of the country in 1850. A popular chieftain, General Taylor, was raised to the highest office in the nation's gift, as it were by acclamation. Veteran statesmen were set aside to make way for the elevation of a man whose life had been spent in camps. He was the "*available*" candidate. He was the people's choice. Men of all parties united their votes on him. And now, under the rule of a pure patriot and an honest man, what glowing dreams of the future were indulged! One might think the Golden Age was about to return and bless the land. Sixteen short moons ran their career, and this popular chief, this pure patriot, this upright man, was suddenly gathered to his fathers. The riderless war horse was led after the hearse of him who never should mount his back again. A third time the blow has fallen. But this last instance was the most horrible of all, from its cause and circumstances. Never has the nation sustained such a shock. Never before in our history has such a crime occurred. Hitherto the annals of the nation have been unstained by so parricidal a blow. And, as if to burn in on our minds the solemn lesson of the instability of all human plans and honors, the blow fell just in the moment of exultation; when the people were indulging in boundless hilarity; when the rebellion seemed about to be crushed, and the prospect of peace was brightening in the horizon; when the flag, the identical flag, of Sumter was run up again to its staff on the fourth anniversary of its being lowered; when the President saw the literal and complete fulfillment of his inaugural pledge, that he would bend all his efforts to recover, hold, occupy and possess, the forts, arsenals, navy yards and seaports which had been traitorously wrested from the national control; when he was entitled to expect the consummation of his fondest hopes, the pacification of the country, the restoration of the

Union, and the commencement of a new era of national prosperity and influence, to which absolutely no limits can be set. This was the moment, so brilliant, so interesting, so glorious, when human ambition seemed to have attained its top and crown, when there was nothing hardly left to desire, this was the selected moment of all moments, for Death, who "loves a shining mark," at one relentless stroke, to prostrate his illustrious victim with all his blossoming honors to the dust. "His sun went down at noon, while it was yet day,"—went down in tears and blood.

By a striking coincidence, some verses have just been brought to light, which were favorites with Mr. Lincoln, and whose mournful ring seem to have contained some presage of his own dismal fate. While Mr. Carpenter, the distinguished artist, was engaged on his Emancipation Picture, and the President was sitting for his likeness, he repeated a poem which had in early life made a deep impression on him, but of the authorship of which he was ignorant.\* At Mr. Carpenter's request he dictated it to him. The whole is too long to introduce here, but the first and last stanzas are peculiarly *apropos* to our present subject.

Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud ?  
Like a swift, fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,  
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,  
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,  
Be scattered around and together be laid ;  
And the young and the old, and the low and the high  
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie..

The hand of the king that the sceptre hath borne ;  
The brow of the priest that the mitre hath worn ;  
The eye of the sage and the heart of the brave,  
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath ;  
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,  
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud—  
Oh why should the spirit of mortal be proud ?

How touching now is the allusion in the last stanza, the swift transition "from the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud!" What a new and sad emphasis they have!

II. Another lesson taught by this melancholy occasion, is, *our Dependence on a Higher Power*.

The tendency to self-esteem and vain glory is deeply seated and world-wide. It is illustrated in the boast of the Chaldean monarch—"Is not this great Babylon which I have built for my royal palace, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" That moment he was smitten with the loss of reason, a species of lycanthropy, and for seven years was excluded from civilized habitations, till he should know "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and

\* The author was William Knox, of Edinburgh, who died in 1825, at the age of 36. The verses are to be found in "Scotia's Bards," edited by R. Carter, of N. York.

giveth it to whomsoever he will." The Atheist Mezentius furnishes another illustration:

" My own right arm and sword succeed my stroke !  
The only gods Mezentius will invoke."

Nor is it in royal bosoms alone this passion finds a home. Humbler persons and meaner employments harbor the same self-conceit.

" Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,  
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,  
And cry, behold the wonders of my might !"

Such persons resemble those foolish idolaters mentioned in holy scripture, who " sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their own drag, because by them their portion is plenteous." (*Hab. i. 16.*)

The American people have not been innocent in this regard. We have been prone to forget our dependence on God, our Fathers' God, and we have magnified the work of our own hands. We relied fondly on our paper Constitution, as if that was a palladium perfectly unsailable. We could not believe that men who had taken oaths to support the Constitution could recklessly subvert it. We had been so accustomed to see the public quietly submit to the expressed will of majorities, that the resistance or secession of a disappointed minority never entered into our calculations. And yet the words of old wisdom might have lessoned us.

" Oaths are but words, and words but wind,  
Too feeble instruments to bind.'

We fancied the old memories of revolutionary heroism could not be easily forgotten, nor the common flag under whose folds that heroism had been displayed, deliberately abandoned or fired on. We were proud of our statesmanship, to keep us in peace among ourselves and to save us from foreign embroilments. We were rather proud of bullying France, and hectoring Austria, that " little patch on the earth's surface." We thought ourselves a match for the world in arms. And when civil war actually broke out, we were of the opinion nothing could resist our military skill and numerous levies. Ninety days were enough, in the opinion of our first statesmen. So the defeat at Bull Run came, filling us with consternation and shame. Then we were taught that the battle is not always to the strong ; that God is not always "on the side of the strong battalions," and that an army without experience, without presence of mind, and without competent leaders, is no better than an undisciplined mob. We were taught by that disaster and by others, by a protracted and stubborn contest, and by the profuse expenditure of precious treasure and more precious blood, that God is an element it is not safe to leave out in military calculations. That we have profited somewhat by our severe tutoring, that the lesson has not been altogether thrown away upon us, may be inferred from the universal tone of the press, and of public speeches and resolutions ; and from the significant fact, so quietly and noiselessly

brought about as to have attracted little remark, but certainly no disapprobation, that our new coinage, instead of a heathen Goddess of Liberty, bears the legend, "IN GOD WE TRUST."

And how signally has the wisdom of the procedures of Providence been vindicated in the events of the last four years! Truly "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men;" "i. e. what might seem to be defective in either wisdom or strength, is yet justified by the result.

The grand result of the present war is the wiping out of the blot of slavery from our national escutcheon. But how was this accomplished? For long years our wisest statesmen, our most earnest philanthropists, our profoundest thinkers, had given to the problem of the safe extinction of slavery their most careful study; but all was to no purpose, even though some meddlesome friends across the Atlantic volunteered their advice. When Mr. LINCOLN assumed the reins of government, the solution seemed to have baffled human wisdom, and he himself was as much in the dark as any one else. See how blindly he groped his way along,

"But further way found none, so thick entwined,  
As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
All path of man or beast that passed that way."

MR. LINCOLN was naturally mimical to the system of Slavery, and had at an early period proclaimed it as his opinion that "the government would not endure permanently half slave and half free. It will become all one thing or the other." But he was strictly conservative. He desired to respect the compromises of the Constitution and of Congressional legislation. But in spite of his moderation and his pledges, the Rebellion burst out. They could not wait to see whether he would be as good as his word. His election was provocation enough. And before his imbecile predecessor in office had retired, the heart of the South was sufficiently fired to proclaim its independence, and a hostile array separated the national capital from the Northern States, and menaced assassination to the new President, who only succeeded in entering Washington in disguise and under cover of the night. Still, even after war had begun, and opposing armies were arrayed against each other in the south and in the west, a temporizing policy was pursued. The Hutchinsons were expelled from the Army of the Potomac for singing abolition songs, and Fremont was displaced in Missouri for issuing an Emancipation Proclamation prematurely; as Hunter was censured in the South. MR. LINCOLN's first step was tentative. He proposed the abolition of slavery in the year 1900; and next, the abortive plan of African colonization in Central America. Then came the march of events, that showed the folly of sparing the negro laborers who provided food for the army while their white masters were fighting in the front. Then came the first Emancipation Proclamation, giving three months to come in, on peril of the termination of Slavery on the approaching New Year's day. The rebels laughed it to scorn. So the President was led along, as by an unseen hand, from step to step, till the arming of the negroes was resolved upon; which

added 200,000 able bodied men to the troops of the Union. Wherever the armies of the Union have since gone, they have carried freedom with them. Practically, the peculiar institution is at an end. Finally, the amendment to the Constitution has been ordered by act of Congress to be submitted to the people of the several states; and the decision of the vexed question is now clearly seen to be a mere question of time. Every body looks upon Emancipation as *un fail accompli*, a thing not to be reversed. The stone is rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre, and with it has been rolled-away our reproach.

But in all this history he must be blind who does not see that an invisible hand was guiding the President, and shaping the most important events by him as a docile agent and instrument. "He leadeth the blind in a way they know not." When the hands of Northern men were tied up by various compromises, wise or otherwise, when their wisdom was utterly at fault to devise a way of extirpation out of our thick-coming difficulties, God took the matter under his own providential disposal, "because he had a favor to us." Or rather, he allowed the South to take the matter into their own hands, he permitted the spirit of infatuation to delude them, so that they themselves untied the arms of the North, voluntarily made themselves outlaws, committed political suicide, and prepared the way for the total loss of that property in man for which the secession was inaugurated and the horrors of war madly evoked. Thus the problem is solved, and the reproach is wiped-away, without any agency of the North violating its compacts, or initiating the process. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

And can we interpret the handwriting on the wall now? Can we trace the finger of Providence in the recent occurrences? While we avoid the presumption of arrogantly divining the future, a reasonable latitude is allowed to modest conjecture. Are we mistaken in fancying that the late appalling event will, under Providence, prove the means of bringing all hearts together, as did the assassination of William, Prince of Orange; the means of strengthening the hands of the Government, and of suppressing for a space the fierce slogans of party spirit? Struck by a common sympathy, that does honor to the noblest instincts of humanity, one universal cry of horror went up from all parts of the land. Southern men themselves, (like Gen. Ewell,) deplored the crime, as the worst thing that could have happened to the South as well as to the North. "It was worse than a crime, it was a blunder!" It will have the effect of making southern sympathizers ashamed of the company they have kept. It will drown the antipathies of Europe, (as we see it is already doing in the British Provinces,) where the assassination of kings and high functionaries is regarded as even more horrible than with us, from their innate reverence for rank, and from their more intimate acquaintance with the evils of the crime.

I have been tempted to think that perhaps Providence saw the necessity of more stringent measures for the repression of rebellion and the exemplary punishment of traitors, and allowed the fasces of authority, the axe and the rod, to devolve into sterner hands. On this point I shall only observe, that the progress of war among us has led us back to the study of the Old Testament and the Psalms of David, and has

shown us many forgotten things there that are applicable to our own times. Many of the severe expressions there found, and which people had fancied obsolete, now come up with increased force and singular pertinence. We are revolving the question whether lenity to criminals is mercy to the State, or even justice to the people, as our new President has intimated.

III. A third lesson of the hour, is, *the Barbarism of Slavery, the Superiority of Free Institutions, and the advantages of the National Union.*

It has not been forgotten how Charles Sumner, in scathing eloquence, exposed the Barbarism of Slavery ; and how immediately after, Brooks, a Southern gentleman, assaulted him at his desk, during recess, and so hurt him about the head that it took a year to recover from its effects ; and how the ladies of his native county made Brooks a public present of a gold-headed cane, as a proof of their estimation of his manly act. All this served unconsciously as the appendix to Mr. Sumner's speech, by way of illustration ; as if he had not made the case plain enough already. And so it went on. One horror was piled on another, one outrage on another, still worse ; the mutilation of the dead, the excepting of the officers of colored troops from the rules of civilized warfare, the massacre of Fort Pillow, the atrocities of Port Hudson, the guerilla system, the systematic starving to death of Northern prisoners, making raids from Canada on unarmed villages for the sake of plunder, seizing peaceful steamboats, firing crowded hotels and places of amusement in large cities, poisoning reservoirs, distributing clothing infected with yellow fever ;—why, it seems to me, if I were to narrate all these atrocities, not with any aid of rhetoric, but simply in their minute and truthful details, there would rise a yell of execration enough to lilt the roof off, threats of inextinguishable vengeance. But I forbear. And all these deeds, and more, culminated in the recent assassination of the President, the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State and his son, and the concerted assassination, as there is reason to believe, of all the Heads of Department, the Vice President included. This last dastardly act could only have been prompted by pure vindictiveness, as there was no object to be gained by it. It was the revengeful tearing and rending by the demon on his expulsion.

In striking contrast with the Barbarism of Slavery, stand out the Superiority of Free Institutions, and the advantages of the blessed National Union. This superiority has been evinced during the progress of the war, in point of intelligence, military skill, material resources, commercial enterprise, financial ability, and moral worth. On the contrary, the dependence of the South, and its helplessness, have become more patent with the lapse of time ; and as it had no resources of industry or trade to supply the continual drain, its financial condition was reduced to a hopeless wreck. The South is bankrupt in men, means and money ; while the North stands up this day, after its enormous losses in blood and treasure, fresh, vigorous and unexhausted. But aside from these general remarks, we perceive the excellence of our institutions in the ease with which the administration is shifted into new hands, without the loss of a day or the loss of a dollar. Not even the death by violence of the Chief Magistrate produces the slightest jar or

confusion, an event which in monarchical countries would be the signal for anarchy. For, says Story, "It has grown into a general practice for the Vice President to vacate the Senatorial chair a short time before the termination of each session, in order to enable the Senate to choose a President *pro tempore*, who might already be in office, if the Vice President, in the recess, should be called to the Chair of State." This "prevents the choice from being influenced by temporary excitements or intrigues, arising from the actual existence of a vacancy."\* It is fairly presumable that in case of the Vice President also being dead, the President *pro tem.* of the Senate would at once succeed to his functions, at least until Congress could be convened. Thus the assertion before made, that the attempted assassination of the chief officers of government was nothing but pure spite and revenge, and could have led to no practical result, is abundantly verified.

It was only under Free Institutions that such men as the late President and the present President could have had a chance to rise to office and influence. Mr. Lincoln began life as a farmer's boy, Mr. Johnson as an apprentice. Neither had any early advantages of education, the latter did not know even how to read till nearly grown up, and his education was carried on beyond the elementary stages afterwards by his wife. What was the secret of their wonderful rise? Industry, indomitable perseverance, and pure moral principles.

There are many more points I should like to enlarge upon, but I have already exceeded the limit which I had marked out for myself. I must therefore hasten on.

#### IV. A fourth lesson of the hour is, *Humility*.

Death dissolves all distinctions, and confounds all ranks. Let the remembrance of our having sprung from the dust, and the necessity of returning to the dust again, preserve us from those haughty, domineering, supercilious airs, which the possession, or fancied possession, of wealth, of talent, of beauty, of gentility, of office, of rank, of social position, sometimes seems to beget in mortals. Shall dust and ashes be vain? Shall dust be conceited and mouth the heavens? Shall dust set itself up contemptuously above its fellow dust? All sprang from the same level, and to that same level shall all be re-conducted. Dust! be humble.

The whole tissue of circumstances in the late distressing tragedy is calcu'lated to humiliate us. There is scarcely a consolatory ray among them all. Contemplate the sudden check given to the wildest rejoicings, the sharp and revolving contrast between the exuberance of exultation and the very nadir of grief, the hand by which the parricidal blow was struck, the very time and place of the catastrophe, and you will find enough to jar upon the feelings. As a Christian minister speaking to a Christian congregation, I cannot refrain from saying, that I would the blow had fallen in some other way, if fall it must; and that the associations had been more august, more holy, more worthy of the dignity of office, and of a Christian people's remembrance. I would the illustrious victim had met his fate on the field of battle when

\*Story on the Constitution, chap. x. p. 76.

he was at the front ; or like Chatham and Adams in the halls of the national legislature ; or like Henry IV, of France, in a public procession ; or like Secretary Seward, upon his bed ; or like Thomas Becket, on his knees at prayer. Then we would have canonized his memory as a blessed saint, as well as a martyr to justice and humanity. But as far as earthly fame goes, he has enough. His name will be echoed in foreign lands. It will be a historic name through future ages. Men will recite the difficulties he surmounted, the success he achieved, the suppression of treason and rebellion, and the emancipation of four millions of human beings.

V. The only other lesson of the hour I can notice, is, *an admonition to trust in Divine Providence.*

The stay and the staff may be broken ; our earthly props may be removed, one after another ; we may be reduced to orphanage and helplessness ; yet must we not despair of the divine protection. Such a condition are we placed in at present. We are just emerging from a four years' war. Great interests are at stake, and require to be delicately and judiciously handled. The position of the nations of the world is a critical one. It is that of a volcano capped for a time, while raging fires are boiling tumultuously within. Our relations with foreign nations are by no means adjusted on the most stable basis. Interests of vast and vital importance demand a Palinurus at the helm. How can we spare the skillful and experienced helmsman at the very moment when the darkness gathers and the breakers are roaring.

"Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,  
A watchman on the lonely tower,  
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,  
When fraud or danger were at hand,  
By thee, as by the beacon light,  
Our pilots had kept course aright ;  
As some proud column, though alone,  
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne ;  
Now is the stately column broke,  
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke ;  
The trumpet's silver sound is still ;  
The warden silent on the hill." \*

Sometimes God snatches away the pillar of the State, as he does the prop of a family, to show us how unwise it is to lean too much on earth, to wean away our doting and idolatrous affection from the creature and fasten it upon its proper object and centre. That Providence which has watched over us so long, will surely not forsake us now. Let "the mighty man, and the man of war, the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, and the eloquent orator," be taken away ; if we forfeit not the favor of the Lord, ruin shall be far from us. It is certainly a pleasing, not a presumptuous, thought, that after subjecting the national character to severe tests, chastening us to keep out vain glory, and training the national conscience, God may intend to elevate us to a higher plane than we have hitherto reached, and make us the world's model, as he has made us the world's wonder.

\*Scott's Marmion, Introd. c. i. The lines were written in reference to Pitt.







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